The

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

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Notes of the Month.

Last month's programme of meetings and services proved, as we anticipated, most attractive and successful. The presence of Dr. Carpenter gave unusual interest to the proceedings, and was responsible for the best attendances for many years. All who were present at the Synod Sermon on the Monday evening and at the Lecture the following night will long remember the impressiveness of both events. The speaker was one who by personality and long experience was qualified to speak words of encouragement and appeal, and Dr. Carpenter himself obviously felt the responsibility of his position at such a crucial time. Much of what he said had in view the world war and the peculiar conditions it has created for religion. It was all the more remarkable, therefore, that he spoke as not without hope that the trend of events was making for the progress of a liberal faith and that greater opportunities for its application and expansion would undoubtedly emerge. Nor was he less insistent upon the growing unity of the different sections of the Christian Church, as evinced in the common conviction that in social service would be found openings for closer co-operation than has hitherto been the case. Some foreshadowing of the mighty problems requiring solution after the war was natural, and was clear and sympathetically sketched ; but, with fitting faith, broad-mindedness, and the spirit of self-sacrificing love, much may be done. The presence of these qualities in the speaker was abundantly evident, and all who listened to his impressive utterance were moved to fitting response. We feel assured that the influence of Dr. Carpenter's visit will long endure amongst us, and that our tasks here will be undertaken with quickened faith and more abounding hope.

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The death of Dr. James Drummond would awaken the deepest sympathy in many Irish hearts and homes. Many persons will need no reminding of the close connection between his family and our Churches. It was in this country that Dr. Drummond was born in 1835, his father being the minister of the Strand Street Congregation in Dublin. His education was received at Trinity College. Consequently the most impressionable years and the most lasting early influences are associated with Irish soil. What he later became we all know, for as scholar, teacher, preacher, author his reputa-

tion was not confined to our own community, but was admitted in still wider circles. It does not fall to the present writer to give a detailed account of his career; such has appeared not only in our own denominational papers, but also in a paper of such outstanding importance as "The Times." The fact that the latter found space in war time for a long and sympathetic memorial notice is in itself evidence of Dr. Drummond's worth and work. Yet there are many readers of this magazine who had more intimate association with our late teacher. They will recall his visits, especially during the ministry of his son, to the North of Ireland, and be thankful for glimpses of a gracious personality even more appealing than the spoken or the written word. To be in his company was to feel, as Dr. Carpenter said in his beautiful trubute at the General Synod Meeting, that he lived as in the very presence of God. While we feel an acute sense of loss, we also rejoice that long life and the most fruitful Christian service were vouchsafed to Dr. James Drummond in fullest measure.

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We cannot withhold allusion to other losses which, if not so intimate, are yet unmistakable. Perhaps our ministers were most fully aware of the importance in American Unitarian circles of the late Dr. Minot J. Savage. As the colleague of that greatly-loved divine, Robert Collyer, at the Church of the Messiah, New York, he first became known to many British readers. But since that time his published works found an honoured place in our collection of the best and brightest Unitarian books. Characterised by lucidity of thought and clearness of statement, they did much to commend our message to thoughtful people outside our body. His first publication, "Christianity the Science of Manhood," was written when he was a Congregational minister, but clearly indicated his ultimate resting-place in our own community. Such a book as "Belief in God" shows an acute, reverent mind, and one fully alive to some of the fundamental problems of the day. But as preacher, as well as author, he attained a high position in American Unitarianism, and his death represents a real loss to the latter.

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Years ago, when the present writer had but newly embraced Unitarian views, there was one North of England divine whose visits as preacher or lecturer to his native district were always eagerly anticipated. This was none other than the Rev. Charles Hargrove, at that time, and for many years subsequently, minister of Mill Hill Chapel, Leeds. Perhaps only a resident in the North of England could best appreciate the revered position which the preacher had won for himself in the hearts of Unitarians. Yet in our body at large he occupied for many years a conspicuous place, speaking at our Conferences, and holding successively positions of the greatest honour. The city in which he so long laboured exteemed him highly for the sake of his public work, and the University of Leeds set the seal upon his distinguished services to education by conferring upon him the degree of D.Litt. Since he retired in 1912 from the active duties of the ministry of Mill Hill Chapel, he had preached in many of our English pulpits, and only recently did duty in the Isle of Wight. Consequently the intimation of his decease came as a shock to those who knew and honoured him, including all those who remember his visit to the North of Ireland on the occasion of the British and Foreign Unitarian meetings a few years ago.

Sunday Schools : Essay Competition. —The adjudicators have awarded prizes as follows :—First prize, Mollie Young, 5 Clonlee Terrace, Belfast; second prize, Norman Webster, 93 Deramore Avenue, Belfast; third prize, John M'Cleery, The Manse, Raloo.

A Thought for the Month

LOVE AND OBEDIENCE.

"Jesus said, 'If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments.' Obedience, then, is his test of love; and in these gentle words we hear the announcement and confirmation of the principle which was so sternly declared by the ancient prophet, 'To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.' To understand the full force of this statement we must remember that Christ's precepts are essentially moral, an expansion and fulfilment of the great moral law which was the most glorious inheritance of the Jewish race. The love that comes with cheap gifts and honied epithets, but has no strength for the daily duties of life, is of a spurious quality; and, though it is true that a little affection is worth more than much service without affection, it is true that genuine love begets the highest form of service, and, apart from service, soon degenerates into a sickly sentimentality. The man who really loves Christ will assuredly study his words, seek to penetrate into his spirit and to understand his great guiding principles, and earnestly endeavour to shape his life accordingly. It is only thus that we can really honour Christ, and not by loud professions and formal observances, or by contempt and rudeness for his sake towards those who follow not with us. A creed or a ceremony may indeed be a genuine expression of the heart's emotion, and we have seen that Christ did not look with disapproval on the gift of a box of spikenard, which possessed no moral utility, and served only to express the deep love with which he was regarded. It is in the nature of love thus to express itself in useless ways, by actions or words which have no meaning, apart from the emotion which gives them birth. But such things are not prescribed; indeed they owe all their value to their perfect spontaneity. The anointing of the feet of Jesus was the spontaneous overflowing of an emotion which could find no other utterance, and it could not have been imitated and repeated by another with the same effect. Intellectual or ritual acts, on the other hand, which are formally prescribed and constantly repeated must tend to become mere habits, and may even sink into heartless superstitions. But the daily offering of the life, the continual endeavour to meet new duties in Christ's spirit, the consecration of the thoughts and feelings, the words and deeds, both in our private moments and in our intercourse with others, are an evidence that the love which they express is sincere and deep; and where that love abides as a motive power, the actions follow."—"Johannine Thoughts," by the late Dr. James Drummond.

THE NECESSITY FOR NON-SUBSCRIPTION.

*A CRITICISM OF PROFESSOR DAVEY'S ASSEMBLY'S COLLEGE LECTURE.**

BY

REV. E. H. PICKERING, M.A., Oxon.

"To each one is given the manifestation of the spirit to profit withal."
—I. Cor. xii. 7.

PART II.

FAITH, AN ACTIVE AND FRUITFUL PRINCIPLE, NOT A MERE PROFESSION OF WORDS.

The greater part of the remainder of the lecture is a clear and competent expansion of his position by reference to the teaching of the Church about Christ from earliest times to the present day in comparison with the needs and aspirations of each age, a review which could only be accomplished by one who thoroughly sympathised with every

*"The Church's Interpretation of Christ," delivered by Professor J. E. Davey, at the Assembly's College, Belfast, 11th April, 1918.

aspect of the Christian spirit, and who sets up no claim to have attained the one and only true aspect for himself. When he comes to review the present age, he says, "Salvation must consist not merely in being saved through Christ, but in growing to be like Christ. . . . The faith that saves is not an act, but an attitude which renders possible, and indeed inevitable, a moral transformation of character. . . . Thus the life and character of Christ are in the foreground to-day; and we must see to it that they are not lost to us again. How utterly far removed from the New Testament teaching is much of the theology with which men have been satisfied in days that are gone. . . . Where in the New Testament can we find that depreciation of good deeds, which under the term 'works' have suffered so much at the hands of Protestant theologians?. . . Men have been taught to think that what they think and that what they do matters little or nothing if only they assent to a doctrine about the death of Christ. Faith, in the scholastic form of belief, has been put in antagonism to moral goodness as if it were a substitute for it, and the only substitute, too, which God would recognise. 'We cannot be wholly good, and therefore we must have faith which absolves us from the obligation, if not from the luxury, of being good at all.' How different are the words of the New Testament, not merely those of James, but those of Christ, the Captain of our Salvation, and those of Paul, the very champion of faith itself. 'The Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.' And again, 'we must all . . . receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.'"

CHRISTIAN SERVICE MORE IMPORTANT THAN SCHEMES OF SALVATION.

In conclusion, Professor Davey calls upon all those who profess Christ to be willing to adapt themselves to the new demands made upon them. "The one demand Christ made of every disciple," he says, "was 'Follow me,' and . . . no amount of preaching of a scheme of salvation can ever absolve the Church from that primary duty." Thus does this brilliant young scholar reiterate the statement he made at the beginning that Christianity is not fundamentally a matter of creed, but of response to the Christ spirit. Moreover, not only does this lead him to insist on an ever-changing and ever-enriching development of Christology as essential to a living faith, but also to the position that the true Christian is one who seeks to lead the Christ life. So far I have heard no Presbyterian comments on this address, which to my mind marks an epoch in Presbyterianism; but surely Dr. Cooke, who drove out those who held similar views to these in his day, would turn in his grave if he could hear a recognised professor of the Assembly's College proclaiming them, and apparently nothing done to stop him.

BROAD-MINDEDNESS AND THE DOGMATIC CHURCHES.

It may be said of Professor Davey, as it has been said of many another broad-minded minister in one or other of the orthodox Churches, that he has no right to remain in the Presbyterian Church which insists on his allegiance to a definite Confession of Faith. The question is a very thorny one. Certainly I often feel moved to say, when such one as Professor Davey is commended to me as being "very broad-minded," that he has no right to be broad-minded. Certain also it is that the Presbyterian Church, and any other Orthodox Church, would have lost infinitely more ground than it has if it were not that these broad-minded men meet the needs of a generation which is demanding a new interpretation, and yet does not like to break away from the old moorings. Yes, if only broad-minded men were to decide that they could not honestly be broad-minded in a Church which demands subscription, there is no doubt that these ante-diluvian strongholds would have fallen long since. But we must not be too

severe on these men. Apart from sentimental and even practical reasons for remaining, they might well ask whither should they go with any hope of doing fruitful work if they left the old Church.

CAN WE OFFER THESE NEW-LIGH TPRESBYTERIANS A HOME IN OUR CHURCH?

It is here that the principle of Non-Subscription comes in. I have heard about these "New Lights" in the Presbyterian Church before; I have talked with them, and I find that what they really want is *freedom.* They do not want even to belong to a Church which happens at the moment to hold their particular views, for they know that no views, not even their own, are final. What they want, it they make any change, is a Church which gives freedom in an ever-extending experience. They want, in short, a Non-Subscribing Church. That they do not want a Unitarian Church was made quite clear to me by one of them, although his own particular opinions would pass for Unitarian. They have felt the deadening influence of subscription, and do not want it in any shape or form, whether *open* or *implied.* They want a Church which, taking its stand on the Spirit of Christ, will not only not technically forbid a continual advance in the interpretation of that spirit, but will actually encourage and welcome it. "Is your's such a Church?" I was asked. "No," I was compelled to reply, "Not altogether. It easily could be if only our members had not got it into their heads that Unitarianism is the last word in theology, so that they readily substitute Unitarian for Non-Subscribing in describing our Church." "Well," said the minister in so many words, "it's something more than Unitarianism I want. It is freedom: freedom to be welcomed and approved, even if I became a Trinitarian or anything else." So that unless these men like to found another Church of their own, we cannot blame them very severely for remaining where they are.

WE MUST PROVE OURSELVES TRUE TO THE PRINCIPLE OF NON-SUBSCRIPTION.

If, however, our Non-Subscribing Church were an undeniable fact, then they would have no excuse either for not coming over to us at once, or for pursuing an active and open campaign in their own Church for the adoption of Non-Subscription. So that we are somewhat to blame for the moral difficulty in which these men are placed. To us has been entrusted the lamp of freedom—the freedom with which Christ set us free, freedom from care, freedom from class distinction, freedom from prejudice, freedom from dogma—and whereas we ought to have let its light shine freely over the waste places of the earth and the tangled undergrowths of the human soul, so that all who saw it might feel its illuminating power, its moral beauty and spiritual warmth, we have allowed its rays to be woefully obscured by putting our own particular creeds and opinions in the way. So doing, we have checked our own development in the direction of reforming and inspiring the world, and have given to others the impression that, after all, our Church is just the same as all the rest, except that we happen to hold rather different views about Christ.

THE CHURCH WHICH PROGRESSIVE AND PRACTICAL CHRISTIANS WANT.

What others want is not a Church that merely happens to hold rather different views about Christ, but a Church that is satisfied to have Christ as its Head, and, as its members, those who are at liberty to hold all sorts of different views about Him. We need have no fear of being Nothingarians. Professor Davey, who evidently holds, as in principle we are supposed to hold, that a Christian is "one who is responding to whatever meanings of the fact of Christ are being brought home to his conscience by the Spirit of God"—he is so far from being a Nothingarian that he is full of enthusiasm for bringing souls to Christ by impressing on them the beauty of his influence and example, and only those who put the Christ life first and interpretations of Christ second can truly feel the glow of faith and conviction. By being true to our principles of Non-Subscription, so far

from being Nothingarians, we shall be well on the way to being genuine Christians. I urge you, then, to value our principles more highly and your individual opinions less, because, although each man must have his own opinions, it is the principle of freedom that unites, individual opinions, if made the test of membership, that divide.

HOW WE NON-SUBSCRIBERS MIGHT LEAD THE WAY TO CHRISTIAN REUNION.

No doubt many of you know that originally our Churches belonged to the Presbyterian Church. We broke away when the majority decided to make subscription to the Westminister Confession obligatory. Now that the younger generation of Presbyterians is learning by hard experience the need for Non-Subscription, it is for us to encourage them by shewing our own zeal for the principle. This may lead, who knows ? to our reunion with the main body of Presbyterians, a reunion which would give strength, and yet leave us all free to develop according to the tastes and traditions of the individual Churches. And, once more, who knows ? this reunion might be the beginning of the reunion of all Christian Churches, for only on the basis of freedom in Christ can they possibly unite. I am convinced that if we show ourselves worthy of our principles we are the most likely means, small and obscure though we be, of bringing about this great achievement, and thereby of setting the Church free to conquer the world, with a mighty strength and enthusiasm springing from the heart of the Christ, re-born amidst strife and agony to bind up mankind's wounds with His healing balm, and to draw together all those hearts at present sundered with His all-embracing love.

ANNUAL MEETINGS.

The annual meetings in connection with the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland were held on 17th June in the First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street. Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D., presided, in the absence of Rev. J. H. Bibby (Moderator), who wrote saying that he had met with a slight accident.

Rev. Alfred Turner was elected Moderator, on the motion of Rev. G. L. Phelps, seconded by Rev. J. A. Kelly.

The new Moderator, having taken the chair and expressed his thanks to the Synod for the honour they had conferred upon him, said that after the war there would be changes. It seemed to him that one of these changes would be the removal of the emphasis which had been placed upon doctrines that belonged to an evolutionary process which belonged to a period after the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that emphasis would be placed upon the teaching of Christ. He thought that we should come to see more clearly that salvation in its best and widest sense was not by any means dependent upon the acceptance of ecclesiastical creeds, but was dependent entirely upon a creed which was capable of being expressed in the terms of life.

Rev. G. J. Slipper was re-appointed Clerk on the motion of Rev. Mr. Rossington, seconded by Rev. Thomas Dunkerley, and Rev. J. A. Kelly was elected treasurer on the proposition of Mr. Slipper, seconded by Rev. Kennneth Dunbar.

Mr. Dunkerley said they would all regret to learn that Rev. Dr. James Drummond died on Thursday last at Oxford and his funeral was to take place that day. A resolution was passed expressing regret at Dr. Drummond's demise and sympathy with his relatives.

Rev. Mr. Rossington moved that the following telegram be despatched at once to his Majesty the King—" We beg to assure our Gracious Sovereign, King George, of our unabated loyalty to him and his Throne, of our respectful admiration for the self-sacrificing manner in which he has ministered to the needs of his subjects in a time of unexampled trial, and of our fervent hope that ere long the efforts of his and of the Allied peoples may lead to a righteous and stable peace." Rev. Mr.

Phelps seconded, and the resolution was carried unanimously.

The Clerk presented his report on the state of the Church, which stated that the number of paying members was 2,480, and non-paying members 144. Increases in 12 congregations numbered 56, but decreases in 10 numbered 88. These figures showed a net decrease of 11 paying members, but an increase of 31 non-paying members.

Rev. John Barron had given notice of the following motion :—" That national education in Ireland be free from denominational control." Mr. Barron said national education should not be under denominational control.

Mr. Dunkerley, seconding, opposed denominational control, referring to the bitter feelings it created amongst children of the various creeds.

Rev. E. S. Hicks, supporting the motion, said the teachers should be paid on a scale in proportion to the valuable services they were rendering to the State.

Mr. Kelly said before the year 1865 the feelings between the children of different faiths were happy. In that year, however, Cardinal Cullen brought about a great change, and his rule had obtained ever since. Until they had removed the influence of the Vatican they would not make progress in the direction indicated in the resolution.

Mr. Rossington said the real object of the resolution was the feeding and cherishing of education generally. They wanted public bodies not to be stingy and to have the teachers better paid.

After further discussion, in which the importance of the layman's part was brought out, the motion was agreed to.

Mr. Phelps moved, and Mr. Rossington seconded, " that the General Synod of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland, being firmly assured that the principles of the Christian religion demand that the spirit of justice and fellowship should govern all relations between nations, is convinced that the conditions and needs of our time constitute a call to the Churches to urge upon the peoples of the world the application of such principles by establishing a League of Nations for the maintenance of right and the permanent preservation of peace."

Mr. J. M. Andrews said by its breadth the resolution might be regarded by some as a pacifist resolution in disguise. What was the definition of a League of Nations ? Was it to include, after the War, Germany, or was it to be confined to the Allies ? He suggested that the words " after the war " be added to the motion.

The resolution was passed in its original form.

Mr. Phelps moved, and Mr. Pickering seconded, the following resolution, which was passed :—" That we, the members of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland in Synod assembled, desire to reaffirm our confidence in the principle of total prohibition of the drink traffic, with compensation, during the period of the war and six months after, and our demand for its adoption. The experience for the past two and a half years warrants the view we desire to express, viz. :—That the tremendous shortage of grain, sugar, and other foodstuffs necessitates the safeguarding of the material, as well as the moral resources of the nation. And should the Government decide, as has been suggested, to purchase the liquor traffic, we call upon it to embody in any such measure the principle of local option, so that the people may have the control of this traffic in their own hands."

Mr. Slipper moved, and Mr.Dunkerley seconded, a resolution that a loyal address be presented to the Lord Lieutenant. This was agreed to unanimously.

The annual dinner took place in the Avenue Hotel, the Moderator presiding.

RELIGION IN WAR TIME AND AFTER.

The same evening a public lecture on " Religion in War Time and After " was delivered in the church by Rev. J. Estlin Carpenter, D.D., D.LITT., the Moderator presiding. Rev. Dr. Carpenter, in the course of an interesting address, said the essence of religion seemed to him to lie in the invincible trust that through all the chances and

changes of this mortal life, the power which was working alike in the universe and in humanity was slowly training us to nobler being, and summoning us to the victory of God. To-day the religion which presented God as "Love" was confronted with an unexampled outburst of lust and horror and pain. And out of the anguish rose the question "Why does not God interfere to stop the war?" It was a big question, to which there were various answers from different points of view. He would only remark that it might be raised concerning many other terrible facts of our social state. The war, thank God, must come to an end at last, if it were only through the sheer exhaustion of the combatants, but the losses from preventable diseases, with all the attendant suffering and distress that they involved to others, went on from decade to decade, from generation to generation. On whom did the responsibility rest? We knew well enough that the responsibility rested with ourselves—with all people who closed their eyes to ugly facts because it was too much trouble to face them. The whole mass of the world's horrors, its crimes and its anguish, could they be rolled into one, presented no greater moral difficulty beneath the conception of a holy God than did the sum of one single infraction of His laws, or violation of His will. The evil was not intrinsically worse because there was more of it. Reason must not let itself be alarmed by mere magnitude. War that was of man's making must also be of man's ending. Our people had shown by their deeds what lay deep in their hearts—love of motherland, love of freedom, love of law, love of honour, love of peace. They were ready to die that liberty might be established, and honour justified, and peace secured. There was the soil out of which religion grew. Let the multitudes be shown that religion was first of all a challenge to personal purity and uprightness, a summons to the great fight with every kind of wrong, and then they would realise that they were in the presence of powers mightier and nobler than their own, and would learn to utter the great name of God. The Churches must, above all, sincerely face the supreme demand for social justice as the moral expression of Christianity in the present life. We were learning now how grave was the responsibility laid upon us as we prayed "Thy Kingdom come," to fulfil the complimentary prayer "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

The Moderator of the Irish Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church has received the following telegram from Lord Stamfordham:—"I am commanded to convey to you and the members of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland the expression of the King's high appreciation of the message received to-day from that body assembled in Synod. Its assurance of loyalty and devotion and of hope that the issue of this war will secure a righteous and lasting peace are especially gratifying to his Majesty at this time."

THE 1918 SYNOD.

By Ullin.

The French Prime Minister during the recent terrific and critical battle, visited the front, and took back to Paris the confidence that "all was well." This is a serious time for the Churches; undoubtedly the testing fire which is trying our national life and its institutions, is challenging religion. The essentials and non-essentials are being discriminated. When the non-essential in religion is placed on a level with the essential it is superstition, and that and materialism are the twin foes of religion. The former the more dangerous, because more insidious than the latter, which is the open and declared enemy.

"All's well" is the watchword we carry back to our congregations. Our Church has felt and feels the shock of battle, and here and there has had to give ground, and the Secretary's report for the year gave no occasion to hang out the flags, but it gave satisfaction, and that is enough.

Within the memory of those of us,

who have known the General Synod since its formation, there have been no meetings as satisfactory as these. The great outstanding feature has been the visit of Dr. Carpenter. He certainly was not spared—three sermons on Sunday, an address to ministers on Monday afternoon, the Synod Sermon in the evening, and on the second day addresses in the afternoon in connection with notices of motion, and the lecture again in the evening. Dr. Carpenter, mentally and physically, gives to strangers the impression of a man younger in years. Undoubtedly his presence amongst us gave a new tone to the whole of the proceedings, and the Synod was unanimously and genuinely grateful for the effort he had made to take the long journey and to give so generously of his strength in response to their invitation.

A well deserved honour was bestowed on the Rev. Alfred Turner, of Templepatrick, in electing him Moderator. Mr Turner's efficient services are known and recognised, and in him the Synod has found a genial and capable Moderator, who will make the best use of his year of office to guide the Church on to lines of practical usefulness.

The details are all published elsewhere; but one noted improvement in the proceedings was the extension of the time of sitting to the afternoon of the second day, thereby allowing ample opportunity for full and frank debate on the notices of motion, which are becoming more and more an exceedingly important part of the proceedings, especially to the newspaper reporters and consequently to the public at large, who learn what is our attitude as a whole to the questions of the day.

The proposal that the Church is out of touch with the practical life of the times surely cannot be laid to our reproach. The Social Union, which has been agreed upon, is fraught with tremendous responsibilities, and may become the most important activity connected with our Church.

Briefly, what is the impression which remains, now that the Synod is over and done with, three words might convey it—brotherliness, earnestness, devotion.

IMPRESSIONS.

By G. V. C.

Our Annual Meetings have come, but they have not gone; in deepest gratitude we say, thank God, they can never die. The silent and hidden currents of desire and thought have left their traces visible, as waves in the deeper sea are discovered when the waters ebb, by the ripple-mark congealed upon the sand. Perishable thoughts and transient emotions are the materials wherewith God has given us to build up the eternal character; and the great and good have no nobler office than to touch the human heart with deep veneration for greatness and goodness—to kindle in the understanding the light of more glorious conceptions and in the conscience the fires of a holier virtue.

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The world-wide shadow o'er human life felt by all of us became, if possible, more apparent when we learned that one of our Irish ministers has for several weeks been officially reported as "missing." Our thought and prayer went forth naturally to wife and children.

* *

Our new Moderator has done in the past much work in and for our Church, and perhaps it is not the slightest exaggeration to say that of all our ministers his heart seems set on making our Church in Ireland a practical living unit, with a vital message for to-day. God speed him in his aim.

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The debating was all on social questions of far-reaching human importance, and revealed how our Church is awakening to a larger conception of life's duties and privileges. Such subjects as that "National Education in Ireland ought to be free from denominational control," that "the Drink Traffic has become a peril to the Nation," that "There

ought not to be a lower standard of moral purity for man than for woman," that "The Christian religion demands a spirit of justice and fellowship governing ALL human relationships, as between man and woman, capital and labour, Church and State, Nation and Nation," etc., all manifested the vitality of our Church towards the changed outlook. We realised the truth of one of the greatest lines in our literature when Walt Whitman said of an outcast—"Not till the sun excludes you do I exclude you."

* *

But the outstanding feature of attraction making our meetings of 1918 for ever memorable was the visit of the foremost living Biblical scholar—Dr. J. E. Carpenter. We were delighted to see that prejudice did not prevent Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Methodists from worshipping with us in the Church which John Wesley considered the best acoustic building he had ever preached in. Some years have elapsed since we last had the privilege of listening to Dr. Carpenter. Meantime, we had had the privilege of hearing leaders of the Orthodox Christian Church, Bishop Gore, Archbishop Bernard, and others, and felt that, while there was great resemblance in much of the thought, the atmosphere was quite different. No one could have listened to Dr. Carpenter's sermon on "being workers together with God," or his lecture on "Religion in Wartime and after," without being impressed not only with his greatness, but his superiority arising out of his having been trained in a Non-Subscribing denomination. The Orthodox leaders took the creeds of the past to see how much of them could be saved, after allowing for the influence upon them of the two forces—Science and Criticism, while Dr. Carpenter frankly and cordially accepted science and criticism as themselves part of God's revelation, and then showed us what views of the world, of life, of God, of man, of Jesus, of the Bible, of the Church we are naturally led to by such acceptance. His method is one of advance, a constructive interpretation of God, Man, and the Universe from its ideal or spiritual side, making creed the reality of the living mind of to-day, and theology, the universe as man knows it NOW, considered on its ideal side. The aptness of his Scriptural quotations, the beauty of his language, his many thoughts on the severity and hope that necessarily arise out of man's working along with God in producing a nobler world for humanity to live in will not die, but will live and bear fruit.

It seems to us like a selfish cry,—
This telling a man that the only thing
Of any importance here below
Is saving himself from a future sting.

Far nobler, far better, it seems to us
To tell a man to help some other;
To send him up and down through the world
Seeking and lifting his fallen brother.

To rescue the starving one from death;
To rescue the sinning one from crime;
To preach the gospel of present help
To the weary ones on the shores of time.

If a man does this, we dare affirm
That he can afford to forego all care
About going to heaven, and give his whole time
To the work of getting his neighbour there.

MEMORIAL NOTICE.

MISS ELLEN HUNTER.

On Sunday, 9th June, Ellen Hunter, the last member of a large family, passed away in her eighty-ninth year, at the "Windy Hill," Cairncastle, the birthplace of her father and residence of her grandfather. The Hunters had been faithful attendants and staunch supporters of the Old Meeting House as far as the memory of the present generation extends. Miss Ellen Hunter was brought up from an early age by her grandmother, Mrs. James Peden (nee Ellen Lorimer), who bequeathed to her her farm and dwelling place at Ballycraigy, near Larne, so that for the major portion of her life she was herself connected with the Old Presbyterian Congregation of Larne and Kilwaughter (Non-Subscribing); but twenty-seven years ago she became an inmate of the household at "Windy Hill," and a warm-hearted adherent of the Cairn-

castle Congregation during the ministry of the late Rev. Frederick Thomas.

Her most marked characteristics were her generosity and hospitality. The present writer has seldom met with a person who seemed to find so little use for money except for donations to good causes or for doles to deserving and undeserving persons. She had laid up treasures for herself on earth, but was rich toward God. She had lived beyond her time, so to speak, but there are still a good many people who can remember her hospitable disposition; a son of a former minister of her's still recalls the good times he used to have when his father walked out from Larne with his three boys to visit Miss Ellen Hunter at her farm at Ballycraigy. Miss Hunter had a great hold upon life; notwithstanding many vicissitudes, and many bereavements, some of which she was never weary of recalling with regret, she gave one the impression that her lines had fallen unto her in pleasant places—that she gratefully acknowledged the enjoyment of a "goodly heritage." But for more than twelve months she had been gradually slipping out of consciousness through failure of memory, and the last stage in her decline was accelerated by a serious fall, from which she sustained fracture of the left thigh a month before her death. William Hunter, her eldest and last surviving brother, died at "Windy Hill" in 1911; one of her younger brothers—but the one who will be the longest remembered—was Dr. Robert Hunter, of Larne, who died eighteen years ago.

The funeral took place on Tuesday, 11th June, a service being held in the Old Meeting House on the way to the family burial ground in St. Patrick's Churchyard, Cairncastle.

LESSON NOTES FOR TEACHERS.

(To be used in accordance with the Scheme of Instruction for 1918, issued by the Sunday School Committee of the N.S.P.C.I.)

Introductory Note to the July lessons on Revelation. These are interim lessons; they are not part of the general scheme, but are only to be used where the Sunday School is not closed for any summer vacation. Where it is closed they should be omitted, and the lessons from the Acts taken continuously.

July 7th. Revelation through Nature. Psalm xix. 1-6. Key Text, Psalm xix. 1.

1. *Revelation is an unveiling.* All knowledge is revelation, because it consists of unveiling before our minds the truth of things, which exists whether we know it or not. There is no real difference between knowledge and revelation such as orthodoxy seeks to make. Some knowledge may indeed seem more wonderful, but even the act of learning that 2 and 2 make 4 is an unveiling. Many things have been hidden from all men for thousands of years. For instance, the planet Neptune existed hundreds of thousands of years, yet it was only in the year 1846 that man found it. God keeps nothing back. Jesus declared: "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed." It is largely a case of "Eyes and No Eyes," which is the story of two boys who walked along the same lane. One of them said he had seen nothing in his walk, whilst the other had lots to tell about the flowers, trees, insects, birds, colours, etc., that he had seen.

2. *Nature* (meaning by that what we call "the world of nature") has much to reveal to us of God's great power. "The heavens declare the glory of God," and throughout the world, in even the simplest thing, such as a daisy or an insect, is revealed to those who look a marvellous wealth of power, design, and beauty.

3. *Nature's lesson to man.* Not only does nature reveal a Divine will, it reveals a law which we must obey if we would be healthy and happy. Many accidents and misfortunes we are as yet unable to avoid, but there is no doubt that life goes best for those who accept the existence of God's law and strive to obey it by eating wisely, by keeping their bodies pure, by keeping their minds open for new truth, by being grateful for all the fruits of the

earth which Divine Providence bestows, and by doing their best to see that all men get a fair share of God's bounties.

The following verse might be learnt with advantage :—

"Thou who hast given me eyes to see
And love this sight so fair,
Give me a heart to find out Thee,
And read Thee everywhere."

July 14th. Revelation through human lives. Read I. John ii. 7-11. Key Text, Proverbs xiii. 20.

1. *All men reveal something of God.* The beautiful lesson from I. John ii. teaches us that only as we look on men kindly can we learn of God. We should never know that God is love unless we ourselves learnt the meaning of love. Those about us are our opportunities for learning of God through being loving. All men are not equally easy to love, becasue they are ignorant, or foolish, or base. But when we try to help them to be happier, wiser, and better, we learn much more of God than if we despised or hated them. See Matthew xxv. 40, and Tolstoi's beautifuly story : "Where love is God is" (Twenty Three Tales by Tolstoi, published in the World's Classics).

2. *Men of wisdom and goodness reveal to us how to become more like God.* Some men and women are much wiser than we. That is no reason, however, for our avoiding their company or their teachings, as we often do. They are sent by God to help us on. It is our duty to become as wise as possible, so that we may become as much like God as possible. Great men point the way, and we must humbly follow. Also, we ought to take the noblest and best men and women as our examples. They will teach us much. Thus until Florence Nightingale insisted that the wounded men in the Crimean war ought to be tenderly nursed and cared for, very few folk realized how cruelly the poor fellows suffered. The result is that to-day the wounded soldiers are made happier and stronger than at any previous time. So God revealed Himself especially in the man Jesus in order that by following him men might come nearer the divine perfection.

3. *The importance of good companions.* See the Key Text. Many children and adults often choose a lower lot of companions than they ought, because it is easier to do as they like among them. But Ruskin wisely says : "Seek rather the company of arch-angels than that of men," meaning that if we mix with and imitate those who are nobler and better than we, we shall become nobler and better. Learn the verse :—

"Lives of great men all remind us,
We can make our lives sublime,
And departing leave behind us
Footprints in the sands of time."

July 21st. Revelation through human writings. Read II. Peter i. 19-21. Key Text, II. Timothy iii. 16.

1. *The meaning of human writings.* Before the alphabet was invented by the Phoenicians, something like a thousand years or more B.C., all the great revelations of God to man ran the risk of being completely forgotten, because, apart from such cumbrous means as cuneiform inscriptions, there was no means of handing them on except by memory. But when writing was invented it was possible to write down on papyrus (reed-paper) and parchment (skin-paper), and then in books by means of printing, the beautiful revelations which help men to know God.

2. *The meaning of "Divine writings."* At first men were so impressed by the marvel of writing that they looked upon it as coming miraculously through special inspiration from God. Then, afterwards, they called, in particular, those writings "divine" which contained religious teaching. They failed to see that all God's revelations are miraculous ; and that since God is always working in man, all writings are equally wonderful. Therefore it matters not whether we call all writings divine or human. We call them human, however, to make clear the fact that man is the means through which they come.

3. *The Bible* therefore is a human writing, because it was written by men. We exalt it, however, to a lofty place because the men who wrote it were chiefly concerned with revealing God's

noble thoughts and purposes. It is for us above all *the* Scriptures, because in the Old Testament it is the history of God's revelation to wonderfully religious men; and, in the New, the history of that greatest revealer of God—Jesus Christ. But we must always remember that God reveals himself in many varied ways, and for that reason other peoples have other bibles; for instance, the Mohammedans, the Koran, the Persians, the Zenda-Vesta, and so on. *The* Bible is our bible, and it is our duty to read, mark, and learn it, for we shall find, in the words of our lesson, that its words are often "a lamp shining in a dark place."

4. *Other books.* It may be asked since all books, the Bible included, are human writings, whether this does not put all books on the same level. It does not. The value of the book consists on the value of the revelation of him who writes. (See Key Text.) All books, whether we call them sacred or secular, history or fiction, are good if he who writes has a true view of things. Obviously that man is very far from God whose thoughts are impure, sordid, and mean. Therefore any books which express and suggest impure, sordid, and mean thoughts are bad. If we read the New Testament well, and also a few of the books of science, history, poetry, and fiction, which have already won the approval of the world's great men, we shall develop a taste that will prevent us from ever liking "bad" books. Learn the following verse:—

"Oh, the wonderful, true story!
Of the Messenger from God,
Who among the poor and lowly,
Bravely and devoutly trod,
Working miracles of mercy,
Preaching peace, rebuking strife,
Blessing all the little children,
Lifting up the dead to life."

July 28th. Revelation through experience. Read Job xlii. 1-6. Key Text, Psalm lxvi. 16.

1. *Job's experience.* At first, Job like many more, regarded his experience as merely a matter of pleasure or pain. That is, unless an experience was enjoyable he would regard it as bad or cruel. The trouble is that scarcely anyone's experience is altogether enjoyable, and, looked at from that narrow point of view, it is very hard at times not to complain of God's cruelty or forgetfulness. But when Job learned that his experience was a form of revelation he became a braver and more patient man. Like the Psalmist, he would be able to look back on life, and say: "I will declare what He hath done for my soul." We are not set here merely to lead an animal life of sensuous enjoyment, but to develop the soul.

2. *Revelation as soul-development.* The chief thing we need to learn is God's relation to us—His children. But we are only His children, because we have souls, and it is only so far as we develop our souls that we shall know that we are His children and what that means. How does a soul develop? In other words, what makes a man's soul good or bad? Do we call a man good if he has great possessions, good health, and fine abilities, or bad if he is poor, suffering, and ignorant? Certainly not. A man's goodness does not depend on whether he is rich or poor, weak or strong, learned or unlearned. It depends on how he employs his wealth or poverty, health or weakness, etc. All the things and all the persons about us, even our own bodies, are material for the soul to use, as a carpenter would use different kinds of wood; and just as we do not call a man a good carpenter on account of the amount of fine wood he uses, but of good work that he does, so a man is a good man if he does good work with whatever lot or position God has given him.

3. *Joy and suffering.* Many folk foolishly say: "It is easy to be good if one has good health and a comfortable position." On the contrary, it is very hard. Just as we should expect a carpenter to make a much more beautiful box out of ebony and gold than out of common deal, so God expects a man to make a much more useful life out of great wealth, etc., than out of poverty, etc. If we are happy, then we must be grateful. If we suffer, then we must be patient. All things come to us as opportunities to show ourselves

good, and so lay bare, unveil, reveal the soul in us. When we look at things in this spiritual way we shall find God working within us.

4. *Conscience.* This, which is called the voice of God, is what we shall hear speaking within us. Whenever we ask ourselves not "How can I gain pleasure or avoid pain?" but "How can I be good?" Jesus says: "If any man willeth to do his will he shall know of the teaching," by which he means that, like Job, many things which seem dark and cruel to us so long as we only selfishly aim at pleasure and pain, will seem bright and good when we aim first and foremost at doing what is noblest and best in the circumstances.

Learn the following verse:—

"It is a still, small, holy voice—
The voice of God most high—
That whispers always in our heart,
And says that he is by.
That voice will blame us when we're wrong,
And praise us when we're right;
We hear it in the light of day,
And in the quiet night."

(The general plan of these Notes on Revelation is taken from the Lesson Notes for December, 1911, issued by the Manchester District S.S. Assoc., to which I was a contributor).

Reports.

Ballycarry.—There passed away at Ballycarry, at the ripe age of 79, one of our oldest members, Mrs. James Campbell, widow of the late James Campbell. She was widely known and much respected for her kindliness of heart and generous hospitality to those in need. Her practical sympathy extended even to those unknown in the district who called at her house and asked for help, and many such has she welcomed to her fireside and provided with a meal. Her late husband was of a similar charitable disposition, always willing and ready to assist the destitute. During several years past Mrs. Campbell had become quite blind and her frame greatly enfeebled so that the end was not unexpected, which came quite peacefully and without suffering, her Christian faith fully assuring her of reaching her heavenly home.

* *

Downpatrick.—Recently the preacher at a special service in Downpatrick Presbyterian Non-Subscribing Church was Rev. J. Estlin Carpenter, M.A., D.Litt., D.D., ex-Principal of Manchester College, Oxford. Dr. Carpenter is an authority on the subjct of comparative religion. He is keenly interested also in the events of the time. Recently he wrote a striking essay contained in a volume, "Ethical and Religious Problems of the War," to which men like Professor Gilbert Murray and Sir Henry Jones are also contributors. Dr. Carpenter is to deliver the annual sermon and lecture at the Synod Meetings at Rosemary Street, Belfast, on the 17th and 18th inst. The lecture on "Buddhism" that he gave in Downpatrick thirteen years ago is still remembered. An unusually large congregation assembled in the old Church in Stream Street. Taking as his text, "Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this came I unto this hour," the preacher analysed the circumstances which had called forth this cry. Then he applied the lesson to the vicissitudes of life, which involved the challenge and test of our religious faith and experience, and quoted several illustrations from incidents of the war. The hymns were led by an augmented choir, Miss Crickard presiding at the organ. Madame Bella Ewan, of Glasgow and Belfast, a fine, deep contralto, gave beautiful renderings of the solos, "O Rest in the Lord" and "The Lord is mindful of His own."

* *

Glenarm.—We regret to have to record the death of two more young men in the great war, which is still raging with unabated fury. Private Thomas Finlay, Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders, son of Mr. Thomas Finlay, Glenarm, was killed early in the war. His name was inadvertently omitted from a previous list. Intimation has been received by his friends

that Private Robert James Pullin, New Zealand Rifles, met his death about the 3rd of May in the present year. He was the youngest son of Mr. Wm. B. Pullin, Glenarm. Prior to his departure for New Zealand, about 14 years ago, Mr. R. J. Pullin, like his father, and the other members of the family, took a great interest in the affairs of the Glenarm Congregation. He was a member of the Choir, and also gave valuable assistance in getting up entertainments of various kinds. He was home on leave from France at the end of March on what proved to be his last visit. We wish to express sincere sympathy with the members of both families in their time of trial and bereavement, and commend them to the loving care of God, who is their refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Unity Guild.—The July outing to Glengormley, via Ligoniel, is postponed to the 27th inst.

(*Communications, including B.E.F. in East Africa, have unavoidably been held over.*)

BIRTH.

GREEN—April 26th, to Mr. and Mrs. R. N. Green, Glenarm, a daughter.

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